



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF NORWICH

DEPARTMENT: Recreation, Parks & Facilities POLICY NO: RPF 2005-03

SUBJECT: Public Skating Policy

APPROVED BY COUNCIL: RES. NO. 28 DATE: September 15, 2005

REVISION NO: 1 AUTHORIZED REF: Res #14 DATE: February 4, 2008

PURPOSE

This Policy is to be used for Public Skating to assist Facility Staff in running a safe and enjoyable program for all users.

POLICY

The Norwich Arena exists to provide residents with opportunities to participate in recreation and leisure activities in a safe and positive environment. This policy is based on Risk Management advice from the Ontario Municipal Insurance Exchange and the Guidelines for Public Ice Skating in Ontario as recognized by the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (O.R.F.A.). Public Skating has been offered since the beginning of community ice rink operations. It is an event that any member of the community may take part in regardless of their age or skill level. Public Skating is defined as a regularly scheduled skating program, which is offered to the general public with or without admission being charged for admittance. Public Skating has been tailored to meet each community need and includes though is not necessarily limited to Adult/Preschool Skate; Senior Skate; Adult Skate; and Family Skate sessions. It may or may not be a program completely sponsored by the Township of Norwich.

DEFINITIONS

Public Skating - Regularly scheduled skating program, which is offered to the general public with or without an admission being charged for admittance.

Senior Skate - A regularly scheduled skating program, which is offered to participants 50 year of age or older, with or without an admission being charged for admittance.

Adult Skate – A scheduled skating program, which is offered to participants 16 years of age or older, with or without an admission being charged for admittance.

Adult/Preschool Skate - Admission limited to adult participants and under elementary school aged children.

Family Skate - Admission limited to all children under the age of 16 accompanied by an adult

Facility Staff - The employees/staff of the Township of Norwich working at the Norwich Arena

Skate Patrol - On- ice supervisor employed by the Township of Norwich

Patrons - Public skating participants, customers and guests

Street Shoes - Any covering for feet other than ice skates

Ice Skate - Boot with steel blade for gliding over ice

GENERAL RATIONALE

The Township of Norwich has identified a need to establish a Public Skating Policy to govern the Public Skating Program. The Public Skating Program offers residents with the opportunity to participate in an unstructured recreational activity. It is essential that the Township of Norwich do all things necessary to ensure a safe and positive environment for both participants and staff.

Ice Surface

As with all other scheduled ice events, ice conditions must be evaluated for safety prior to the program-taking place. Poor ice may include deep gouges, paint or paper lines which migrate to the surface, net peg-hole areas, unfrozen areas, dirt from the ice resurfacer tires, debris dropped by skaters or any other items which may cause a skater to fall and/or hurt themselves or others. Staff must check continuously for deteriorating factors and must monitor ice conditions. Any detection of poor ice must be dealt with immediately. A traditional hour block is accepted to be 50 minutes to allow for the reconditioning of the ice surface. The number of persons participating in the program and ice conditions will dictate flooding requirements. The Building Code Act, Egress from Public Buildings Act, Fire Marshals Act and Occupiers Liability Act, governs capacity loads for such events.

Admissions

Programs that charge an admission must submit GST on such fees. At times, public skating programs become a hang out for community youth, which creates a control problem for staff. It is considered an acceptable practice to charge all those entering the facility during a public skating session as a control measure. The Ontario Recreation Facilities Association recommends that the skating capacity of a standard ice surface (85' x 185'), such as ours, be no more than 160 persons.

Not more than 160 persons on ice at any time during a Public Skating Program

On Ice Supervision

Competent personnel will supervise each public skating session. No person under the age of 14 years will be allowed to act as a skate patrol. Persons 16 years of age and younger should not be allowed to supervise a public skating session on their own. However, a person under the age of 16 may be permitted to assist if directly supervised by a person more than 16 years of age. The Ice Patrol must be 16 years of age.

The following on ice supervision is recommended:

Patrol on Ice	Patrol to Skater Ratio
1 Skate Patrol	1 to 59 skaters
2 Skate Patrol	60 to 119 skaters
3 Skate Patrol	120 to 160 skaters

The Occupational Health and Safety Act require that all employees will be provided with adequate training. It is recommended that each skate patrol will have First Aid training; the Township will only be responsible to provide WHMIS and Emergency Evacuation training and may be responsible to provide other identified training as required.

It is recommended that Skate Patrol wear a helmet at all times while on the ice. It is further recommended that identification be worn and a whistle be provided for control purposes.

There should be a constant flow of skaters. Skaters should not be allowed to gather together in any area. Skaters should not be allowed in player seating areas. All Skaters should leave the ice surface area to rest.

Unruly Patrons

All acts of vandalism, unruliness, violence, injury or general concerns must be recorded. The Behaviour Management - Zero Tolerance of Violence and Vandalism in Township of Norwich will govern all acts of vandalism and violence.

The following will govern Unruly Patrons during Public Skating; incidents will be recorded in a logbook. Any person causing a disturbance at Public Skating by not adhering to the rules of safe skating, not obeying staff or by jeopardizing the safety of others will be subject to the following:

1. On the first offense, a verbal warning regarding their behaviour and the consequences of any further infractions explained.
2. *On the second offense, a denial of public skating privileges for a one-week period will be imposed. Parents or guardians must contact the Facilities Supervisor or designate before re-admittance is allowed.*
3. *If the third infraction of the rules takes place a six-month suspension of all privileges of the arena will be imposed. A letter of cancellation of privileges will be sent by registered mail.*

Skate Patrols are not to physically remove skaters who are misbehaving. If a skater must be removed, the Skate Patrol will summon assistance.

When the parent or guardian returns to pick up the misbehaved skater the Skate Patrol and the Facilities Supervisor and/or designate staff should ask to speak to the parent or guardian. Outline the occurrence and the ramifications of future incidents. At all times employees will remain calm, firm and respectful.

In all cases where staff has spoken to a parent or guardian, an incident report must be filled out and documented in the Public Skating Logbook. Incident forms will be completed as required by skate patron, when situations warranted.

Skate Patrol must never physically remove a skater. Always summon assistance when dealing with an unruly skater.

Ice Resurfacing

No person shall be permitted on the ice when the ice-resurfacing unit is in operation.

For the safety of the ice resurfacers operator and the general public it is acceptable for one Skate Patrol to be on the ice during the flooding period.

Skate Patrol duties while resurfacing:

While on the ice, it is the requirement of the Skate Patrol to:

1. Be in clear visual sight of the ice resurfacers operator at all times. The Skate Patrol will never hang onto the ice-resurfacing unit.
2. To ensure no persons are on the ice at anytime prior to, during or until the ice resurfacers is off the ice and access doors are secured.
3. To ensure all ice surface doors are closed.
4. That all persons are well back from the edge of the surface so as to not distract or interfere with the ice resurfacers operator.
5. That no foreign matter is on the ice surface before or after the flooding process.
6. To evaluate ice conditions, giving any concerns immediately to the ice resurfacers operator, with specific attention to goal areas and net peg holes being given.

Skating Aids

No person should enter onto the ice surface during any public skating program unless ice skates are worn. Street shoes should never be worn on any ice surface. If a person must be on the ice in footwear then they should be cleaned very well and someone on ice skates should escort the person. The use of any skating aids, except for those individuals that are physically challenged shall not be permitted on the ice during public skating programs. Facility staff should be educated on when learn to skate programs such as Parent & Preschool Skates, Adult Public Skate are held and advice patrons of such services. No person shall enter onto the ice surface during any public skating program unless ice skates are worn. Skating Aids allowed only during learn to skate programs.

Physically Challenged Persons/ Persons with a Disability

Section 1 of the Human Rights Code Act, Chapter H.19, R.S.O. 1990, reads as follows:

“Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods and facilities without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, same sex partnership status, family status or disability.”

For the safety of all involved it is permissible to designate a specific area for wheelchair use during public skating i.e. close to the boards. Wheelchairs must not interfere with the flow of the skaters; i.e. no public skating with hockey, no sleds with public skating etc...

Physically challenged persons who wish to participate in public ice skating programs by using their wheelchair or an ice sledge should be permitted to do so. However, persons accompanying physically challenged persons onto the ice must do so on ice skates (being a skilled skater) or cleats.

For the safety of all skaters a wheelchair will have their wheels cleaned prior to entering onto the ice surface as to not track dirt or deposit any other foreign matter onto the surface.

Physically challenged persons who wish to participate in public ice skating programs by using their wheelchair or an ice sledge should be permitted to do so.

For the safety of all involved it is permissible to designate a specific area for wheelchair use during public skating i.e. close to the boards and marked using pylons and/or other visual barrier.

In the case where an individual or agency has a private rental and wanting to bring a child in a wheelchair onto the ice, this should only be done in a controlled supervised manner. The Renter must provide the Municipality with a hold harmless agreement and add the Municipality on their Insurance program as an additional named insured with respect to this activity; i.e. Board of Education.

Private rentals wanting to bring a child in a wheelchair onto the ice will be permitted although, this should only be done in a controlled supervised manner and must submit a hold harmless agreement and proof of insurance naming the Municipality as additionally insured has been received; i.e. Board of Education.

Skaters Code of Ethics

Rules of conduct are positive risk management tools and must be posted.

All patrons who participate in ice skating programs must respect the following rules:

1. No food or drink on the ice surface,
2. No throwing snow,
3. No horseplay, games or excessive speed skating.
4. No carrying children,
5. No balls, pucks, chairs, pylons, strollers or any other item which might interfere with the safety of any skater while on the ice surface.
6. Skate with the direction of all skaters.
7. Listen and adhere to the Skate Patrol at all times.

All participants must be wearing skates while on the ice surface and consider the use of a helmet as they are strongly recommended.

Music

The music being played as background effect should be chosen and approved by the facility staff. It

is recommended that tapes/CD's which are brought to any skating session with no cover or list of songs should not be played for public events.

Emergency Evacuation Planning

Should there be a toxic leak, fire; hydro interruption etc, Skate Patrollers, along with all other arena staff must be provided with adequate emergency evacuation techniques/training. Skate patrol must be prepared to provide guidance to all patrons during emergency situations. They must know their responsibilities and limitations under extreme circumstances. The Facility Manager or designated staff person in charge must be aware that a power interruption may affect P/A use. Training should be done regularly so that skate staff has been properly prepared for all situations.

All staff must be provided with adequate emergency evacuation techniques/training.

Skate Patrol must be equipped with flashlights and two-way communication systems and be trained in basic emergency situation(s) protocol.

Clear evacuation announcements for the facility's P/A system both permanent and portable must be in place.